



## **SBA NAMES NORFOLK ENTREPRENEUR JAMES B. HART AS VIRGINIA'S MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR**

**Richmond, Va.** - James B. Hart, President of Arriba Corporation of Norfolk, Va. has been selected the 2006 Minority Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Richmond District Office.

SBA Richmond District Director Ronald Bew presented the award to Hart on October 12 at the SBA's MEDWeek luncheon held in conjunction with the National Association of Government Contractor's (NACGBE) 2006 Industry Day at the Peninsula Workforce Development Center in Hampton, Va. MED Week is a national celebration recognizing contributions of minority business to the nation's economy.

"Jim Hart is an excellent example of someone who has pursued the American dream through entrepreneurship," said Ron Bew, District director of the Richmond office. "The success of Arriba Corporation demonstrates what happens when strategy, hard work, and commitment come together."

Hart, a Hispanic American and service-disabled veteran, started Arriba Corporation in 1998 to provide construction and engineering services with only two employees and one contract. It wasn't long before, true to its name (*Arriba is "up" in Spanish*); the firm began its ascent in the construction industry, specializing in security related construction. Now employing 25 people with revenues exceeding \$16 million, Hart has exceeded his goal stated in the firm's original business plan: "By 2008, Arriba will experience 100 percent growth and have established a reputable presence in the competitive marketplace."

Arriba Corporation is a participant in SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program.

The 8(a) Business Development Program is an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society. SBA has helped thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs over the years to gain a foothold in government contracting. Participation is divided into two phases over nine years: a four-year developmental stage and a five-year transition stage.

Participants can receive sole-source contracts, up to a ceiling of \$3 million for goods and services and \$5 million for manufacturing. While SBA helps 8(a) firms build their competitive and institutional know-how, the agency also encourages them to participate in competitive acquisitions.

To qualify for program certification, a small business must be owned and controlled by a socially and economically disadvantaged person. Under the Small Business Act, certain presumed groups include African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. New rules make it easier for non-minority firms to participate by proving their social disadvantage.

Since its founding more than a half-century ago, the U.S. Small Business Administration has delivered about 24 million loans, loan guarantees, contracts, counseling sessions and other forms of assistance to small businesses. In the Small Business Act of July 30, 1953, Congress created the U.S. Small Business Administration, whose function is to "*aid, counsel, assist, and protect, insofar as is possible, the interests of small business concerns.*"

The SBA also helps people recover from disasters and rebuild their lives by providing affordable, timely and accessible financial assistance to homeowners, renters and businesses. The charter also stipulated that the SBA will work to ensure small businesses receive a "fair proportion" of government contracts and sales of surplus property.

For more information about the SBA online, go to [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) or contact the Richmond District Office at (804) 771-2400.